

Steal This Hook!

Devilish Doings

By Robert Wiese



When devils get involved with a scheme, the complexity of it all spirals almost beyond mortal imagining. And this is not surprising, as hell is perhaps the greatest bureaucracy in all of existence. All the devils plan and plot and try to outplot each other without being, in turn, outplotted. This month, the new [Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of Hell](#) comes out, and boy is it cool. It contains a whole lot on devils, including a section on playing devils and some information about the deviousness of devilish plots. Thus, this month's hooks all involve devils in some way. So enjoy, and we may see you again next year. Unless the devils get us, that is.

Devils from the Sea -- *Forgotten Realms*

Ravens Bluff has been called the City of Adventurers, because almost nowhere else on all of Faerûn will you find so many in one place. The Vast is a dangerous place, and something always happens that requires a hero. This night is no exception. The PCs are walking the docks of the city, perhaps looking to spend the evening at the unique underwater bar called Sharkey's. The sea, however, comes to them as dark shapes rise from the waters and move into the pools of light created by the street lamps. They also swarm the ships tied to the docks, and start killing everything that walks on land. The creatures, sahuagin, seem driven to recklessness and their attack has a ferocity not normally reported for sahuagin attacks.



Once the PCs have helped drive the devils of the sea back beneath the waves, they are approached by Corwin Stark, a representative of the Merchant's Guild. Stark invites them into a tavern, and in true Ravens Bluff style seeks their help in preventing further attacks. This is the second, he reports, in the last month. He has wealth to offer, but he also knows that the sahuagin probably have wealth too, and the less he can offer the PCs the better.

d100 Motivations

01-40 The merchants are sincere; they really want the attacks prevented.

41-65 One merchant has made an alliance with the sahuagin and is using them against his or her rivals.

66-85 The Merchant's Guild senior members really want to enslave the sahuagin, and think they can do so. They want the PCs to find the sahuagin and report their location.

86-00 Some demons led by an aspect of Demogorgon, along with some ixitachitl, are working against the sahuagin, but don't want interference from the PCs either.

d100 Complications

01-50 The sahuagin raids, which have happened all along the coast of the Vast as well as in Sembia, are motivated by the presence of an aspect of Sekolah (watch for the web enhancement for *Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of Hell* on the Wizards website), the sharklike god of the sahuagin. He is driving the creatures to show greater devotion to their devilish god.

51-75 The raids have been undertaken by different clans of sahuagin. Each of the clans involved is raiding the surface for weapons and wealth to use in the conflict in which the clans are involved. If not stopped, the conflict could devastate cities along the Sea of Fallen Stars.

76-90 Groups of aquatic ghouls are following the sahuagin and using the chaos of the attacks to claim weakened victims to eat.

91-00 A blue dragon is stirring up conflict among the sahuagin, and then picking them off slowly as they return from their raids with loot. Thus, the dragon increases its treasure hoard. [You might want the blue dragon to be Gargantuan, so you can use the new **D&D** Icons Gargantuan blue dragon mini coming out in January.]

Heartfelt Devotion -- Eberron

Walking the bridges that make up the "streets" of Sharn can be dangerous. Things can happen to you at any time -- especially at night when fog obscures the way on the upper walkway levels. This particular night, the PCs are on their way through the fog to somewhere when they hear a muffled scream and then a thunk. Running to the scene, they find either nothing at all or track marks of someone being dragged away, or maybe even a couple people dragging someone away.

Campaign Adaptation

Sahuagin raids are pretty common in any campaign world in which the creatures exist. Here are some suggestions for other campaigns. You may find [Stormwrack](#) very useful for the underwater part of the adventure, and *Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of Hell* can help with the general tactics of devils. If you actually use Ravens Bluff as the setting, you might want to get your hands on *LC4: Port of Ravens Bluff* (a very old TSR publication) for information about the dockside businesses. [Cityscape](#) could also be useful in this regard.

Eberron: Sahuagin are prominent underneath the main water approach to Xen'drik, so that might be a good place for this adventure.

Generic: A coast near a sahuagin settlement is all you need. It doesn't even have to be a coast, since the sahuagin could be raiding ships or floating cities or small island communities. Having some aquatic elves nearby could add some complications.

d20 Modern: I can picture sahuagin living in the Ring of Fire area of the Pacific, so perhaps Japan would be a good site for this adventure. Or Australia.





They later find that a number of people have disappeared in the last few months in different ways. It's hard to determine exactly how many are connected because lots of people disappear in Sharn, but they eventually find a common link with enough of the victims to see that there is something going on.

If the PCs are not interested in looking into the one incident they (almost) witnessed, then a day or so after telling someone about it they are approached by the wife of a merchant who disappeared two months ago. She wants to hire them to find out what happened to her husband, and she hopes that there is some connection between her husband's disappearance and what the PCs told that they saw.

d100 Motivations

01-30 The merchant's wife, if she comes into it, is sincere.

31-60 The merchant's wife is a devil in disguise (or a demon, depending on who is behind the kidnappings). This creature does want the PCs to solve the disappearances, because that weakens the other side's current plan without any effort on the outsider's part.

61-75 Law enforcement officers don't want the PCs involved, and they hinder the PCs as much as is reasonably possible. One of the victims is a high-profile NPC and this person (or someone else close to the NPC) doesn't want certain details to come out.

76-00 The merchant's wife is a cultist who hires the PCs. Then the cult kidnaps anyone the PCs talk to, so that all the disappearances can be blamed on the PCs.

d100 Complications

01-40 Glasya, recently made an archdevil, seeks more power to use in the manipulative games that archdevils play. She hopes to open a large *portal* from Shavarath to Eberron and pull a whole city into the plane of endless conflict. This she would add to her realm. She needs a lot of hearts to be sacrificed to complete the spell, and her cult in Sharn has been collecting them. Over sixty people are imprisoned in the abandoned levels at the bottom of one of the oldest towers.

41-55 In addition to the above, a demon lord has learned of the plan and wishes to co-opt the whole endeavor at the last minute and steal the city out of Glasya's grasp.

56-65 A cult that thinks it is following a devil is actually enslaved to a rakshasa. This creature is trying to free one of the greater rakshasas from its imprisonment in Khyber, and it needs living victims to do so.

Campaign Adaptation

Cityscape would probably be quite useful for much of this adventure, though you could make the city part smaller and move the action to the wilderness. In that case, *Races of the Wild* or one of the environment-series books might be useful to you. And, of course, the two *Fiendish Codex* books should help if you play up the demon/devilish aspects.

Forgotten Realms: Any large city with a diverse religious panorama is suitable. Waterdeep may seem the best, but Selgaunt in Sembia is equally good.

Generic: Any large city with a diverse religious panorama is suitable. I just said that, didn't I?

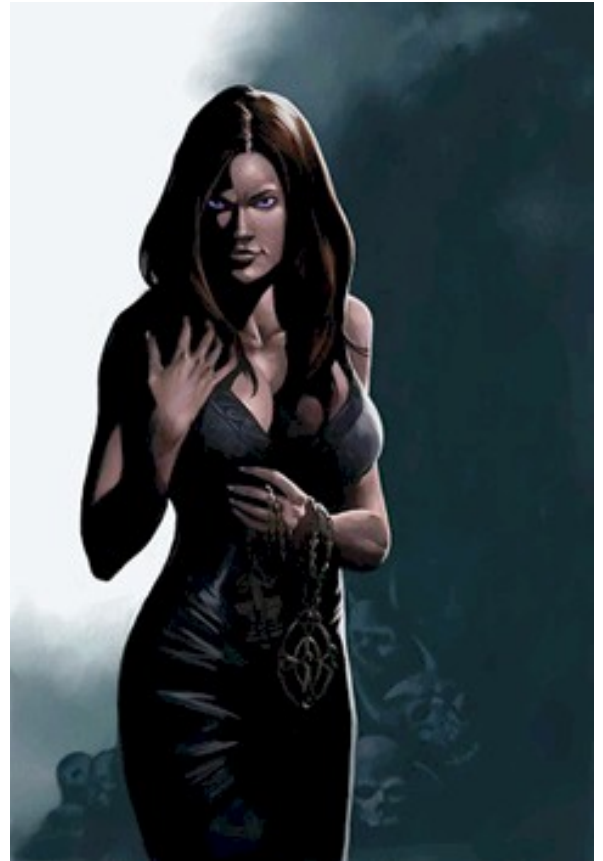
d20 Modern: Any large . . . okay, okay. Try London, or Rome, or Cairo, or even Shanghai.

66-85 Whoever is behind the kidnappings, the PCs are the final planned sacrifices. They are being drawn into the adventure by false information so that they come to false conclusions. At the "final" battle, if they are slain because they have miscalculated the opposition, whatever ritual the DM has chosen is completed.

86-00 The Blood of Vol is stealing the victims from the kidnappers and making them into vampire servants of Vol.

Beauty and the Ogres -- *Forgotten Realms*

Triel, south of the Western Heartlands, is a bustling but small town on the road between Waterdeep and Scornubel. A lot of trade passes through the town, but since it is not an endpoint, the merchants there do not see as much wealth as they might in Scornubel. The town has a direct road to Elturel, so folk can make some money by means other than service industries.



The Lord Mayor of Triel constantly schemes to bring more money into the city and more prestige to himself. Aside from a lot of raw talent, he is blessed (sort of) with a beautiful daughter named Melomine, who has a reputation for hanging with a lower class of crowd than her father would want. She also has a certain reputation among the young men. One evening, just after the PCs arrive in town, she returns from a party to her father's house and disappears. Tracks at the scene show that her coach stopped and a number of ogres surrounded it. No human tracks leave the area, but two of the ogres were carrying something heavy. A few drops of blood fell between the tracks as they led out town.

The following morning, the lord mayor's chamberlain finds the PCs where they are staying and hires them to find the missing girl. He offers either money or a part interest in a business venture that the lord mayor has just started.

d100 Motivations

01-40 The lord mayor is sincere in wanting his daughter back, and the chamberlain does not lie to the PCs.

41-60 The lord mayor sold his daughter, who was too loose for his

reputation to bear, to the ogres to pay off a debt.

61-80 Merchants in Elturel are responsible for the kidnapping, and they plan to use the girl as leverage to acquire controlling interest in the lord mayor's newest venture.

81-00 The lord mayor is sincere, but he is afraid that a political rival is behind the kidnapping. He doesn't want to be forced into an awkward situation and will sacrifice the girl, but he wants to try to find her first.

d100 Complications

01-35 Melomine is actually a pleasure devil (see *Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of Hell*) and has been for some time. The real Melomine was killed over a year ago, and the pleasure devil has been using her identity to corrupt the local priests and law officials. That is why Melomine is known to be somewhat loose with her affections. She wants to move on, so she set up this escape from Triel.

36-50 While the PCs are looking for Melomine, the lord mayor receives an ultimatum and must release some dangerous criminals to buy time. The PCs have to track them down too.

51-65 If Melomine dies (the PCs fail), she returns as a ghost and haunts the PCs and her father until put to rest.

66-90 While the PCs are searching, some spawns of Tiamat or cultists of Malcanthet (see [Fiendish Codex I: Hordes of the Abyss](#)) grab Melomine from the ogres and leave few clues behind. The PCs have to contend with this new factor.

91-00 Melomine is actually a succubus servitor of Malcanthet, and an erinyes or a pleasure devil becomes allied with the PCs in a dubious way against the common demonic threat. The rewards from devils for success could be very interesting, including access to feats in *Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of Hell*.

Campaign Adaptation

Kidnappings are, unfortunately, oft-heard news stories, plus they aren't unusual in most published campaign settings. Thus, most campaign worlds can support this adventure. This adventure makes heavy use of material from *Fiendish Codex I: Hordes of the Abyss* and *Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of Hell*. You might also want the new *Cityscape* supplement to flesh out your town environment.

Eberron: For variety, set this in Dragonroost in Zilargo, and make everyone gnomes. Or to be even crazier, set it in Grellreach in Darguun and make everyone into hobgoblins.

Generic: A town with a lord mayor that the PCs have never been to is what you need. If they have been there, then you have to explain how the mayor's daughter's disposition changed.

d20 Modern: Las Vegas, baby. It has to be. You can use humans, or bring in some shadow creatures and have the story unfold in a small, segregated community of weird creatures.

About the Author

Robert Wiese entered the gaming hobby through the Boy Scouts and progressed from green recruit to head of the most powerful gaming fan organization in the world. He served as head of the RPGA Network for almost seven years, overseeing the creation of the **Living Greyhawk** and **Living Force** campaigns, among other achievements. Eventually, he returned to private life in Reno, Nevada, where he spends as much time as possible with his wife, new son Owen, and many pets.

He is still involved in writing, organizing conventions, and playing, and he models proteins for the Biochemistry Department of the University of Nevada, Reno.

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